

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 IO-12 EUR-25 AID-20 DPW-01 SR-02

ORM-03 RSR-01 /131 W

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O 240856 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2108

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9150

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT SITREP FOR MAY 23, 1973

FOL SENT ACTION SAIGON FM CAN THO AND RPTD FOR YOUR INFO QTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAN THO 0348

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MOPS, MARR, SREF, CA, HU, ID, PL, VS, CB

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR MAY 23, 1973

1. SUMMARY: FIGHTING IN MR IV FELL OFF SHARPLY MAY 22. THE GVN DISPLAYED RECENTLY INFILTRATED NVA PRISONERS TO ICCS AS PROOF OF COMMUNIST CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS. ARVN RANGER BATTALIONS HAVE REDEPLOYED TO CHECK VC/ NVA INFILTRATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY SITUATION: (A) FIGHTING DECLINED SHARPLY MAY 22. MR IV REPORTED ONLY 25 INCIDENTS-- NO GROUND ATTACKS, 14 ATTACKS BY FIRE, NINE HARASSMENTS, AND TWO TERRORIST INCIDENTS. EVEN HARD PRESSED CHUONG THIEN EXPERIENCED ONLY LIGHT ACTION. CASUALTIES WERE CORRESPONDINGLY LIGHT: 13
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RVNAF KILLED AND 70 WOUNDED, 58 VC/ NVA DEAD AND FIVE CAPTURED.

(B) A VC BARRIER BRIEFLY INTERRUPTED TRAFFIC ON HIGHWAY 4 MAY 16 IN SAM GIANG DISTRICT, DINH TUONG PROVINCE. DURING THE NIGHT OF MAY 15 THE VC SEIZED AND DESTROYED A WATCHTOWER AND THREW UP A ROADBLOCK ON THE NEARBY HIGHWAY. BY THE TIME AN RF BATTALION REACHED THE SCENE THE NEXT MORNING, THE VC HAD SLIPPED AWAY APPARENTLY WITHOUT LOSSES.

3. ICCS: THE GVN/ JMC MAY 20 FORMALLY PROTESTED NVA POST-CEASEFIRE INFILTRATION TO THE REGION VI ICCS. THE GVN INVITED ICCS MEMBERS TO INTERVIEW FOUR NVA PRISONERS WHO ADMITTED ENTERING SOUTH VIETNAM AFTER JANUARY 28. ONE PRISONER, FROM THE 21 ST RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY OF THE 207 NVA REGIMENT, WAS TAKEN MARCH 21 NEAR HONG NGU, KIEN PHONG PROVINCE. THE GVN CAPTURED THE OTHERS MAY 16 IN KIEN TUONG PROVINCE. THE THREE, INCLUDING TWO OFFICERS, BELONGED TO THE NVA 5 TH DIVISION'S E-3 REGIMENT. ACCORDING TO THE VICE CONSUL IN MY THO, THE GVN DELAYED FILING THE PROTEST UNTIL THE CANADIANS ASSUMED REGION VII CHAIRMANSHIP MAY 20.

4. GVN ACTIVITIES: FOR SOME TIME MR IV COMMANDER MGEN NGUYEN VINH NGHI HAS PRESSED THE JGS TO PERMIT HIM TO MORE FREELY LEAD HIS RANGER BATTALIONS. THE CORPS RANGER BATTALIONS HAVE BEEN TIED TO TACTICAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY (TAOR) AND NGHI USUALLY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO DEPLOY THEM AT WILL. SEVERAL SIGNS SUGGEST NGHI IS WINNING HIS POINT. WE REPORTED TWO RANGER BATTALIONS' DEPLOYMENT INTO NORTHERN CHUONG THIEN PROVINCE ALONG THE KIEN GIANG BORDER MAY 21 (CAN THO 0339). MR IV NOAD CARRIES THE 94 TH RANGER BATTALION ON THE BORDER OF THE 21 ST DIVISION TAOR IN KIEN BINH DISTRICT OF KIEN GIANG PROVINCE. IN ADDITION TO CONTROLLING VC/ NVA MOVES IN THESE AREAS, THE NEWLY DEPLOYED RANGER BATTALIONS SIT ASTRIDE THE VC/ NVA 1- C SUPPLY ROUTE. REPORTS REACH MR IV WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY THAT THE VC ARE INFILTRATING MEN AND MATERIAL INTO THE SOUTHERN DELTA. DURING HIS MAY 11 CONFERENCE WITH DIVISION COMMANDERS AND PROVINCE CHIEFS, NGHI EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE INFILTRATION RATE AND GAVE ORDERS FOR REGULAR AND TERRITORIAL FORCES TO DEPLOY IN GREATER STRENGTH ALONG THE 1- C SUPPLY ROUTE. THE RANGER BATTALION MOVES INDICATE COMMANDERS ARE CARRYING OUT NGHI'S ORDER.

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STRICTLY SPEAKING THE REDEPLOYMENT AND MANEUVERING OF THESE UNITS IS A CEASEFIRE VIOLATION. OF COURSE, THE INFILTRATION OF NEW MEN AND MATERIEL IS ALSO A VIOLATION.

5. CAMBODIAN REFUGEES: ABOUT 16,000 CIVILIAN REFUGEES FROM THE CAMBODIAN FIGHTING HAVE SOUGHT SUCCOR IN VIET NAM. NEARLY 1000 ETHNIC VIETNAMESE FROM CAMBODIA HAVE FOUND

SHELTER AT AN ABANDONED AIRSTRIP IN AN LONG VILLAGE, DONG
TIEN DISTRICT, KIEN PHONG. FIFTEEN THOUSAND CAMBODIANS HAVE
CROSSED THE FRONTIER INTO CHAU DOC SINCE THE CEASEFIRE.
MOST OF THE KHMER REFUGEES ARE IN TWO CAMPS NEAR TINH BIEN
DISTRICT TOWN. MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE WORKERS HAVE
IMPROVED SANITATION AND HOUSING FACILITIES, DISTRIBUTED FOOD,
AND CURBED THE RAMPANT DIARRHEA WHICH EARLIER WAS PROBABLY
RESPONSIBLE FOR 19 DEATHS. CAMBODIANS FREELY COME AND GO,
SEEKING WORK OR MERELY ESCAPESFROM THE TEDIU OF CAMP LIFE
IN NEARBY TRI TON DISTRICT
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